

What is US Landcare?

US Landcare is a partnership of diverse people and organizations intent on rallying broad public participation for conservation-based actions through local groups. US Landcare groups are community-based groups of volunteers working on conservation projects that contribute to environmental, social, and economic outcomes. Groups include individuals from various sectors of society including people who work the land, other community members, businesses, and governments.

We are empowering ourselves and building a conservation ethic. We are taking responsibility for the stewardship of our land and water—identifying and acting on needs through local groups and group actions. We ask you to join with us and help grow the movement in the United States.

You might be a US Landcare group if you are:

- working toward environmental, social, and economic outcomes (known as the “Triple Bottom Line”);
- working with family, neighbors, and/or the community to achieve broader results;
- taking group action to improve your community; and/or
- pulling together multiple efforts for land or water conservation.

You might be a US Landcare partner if you:

- promote, recognize, and publicize US Landcare principles;
- actively participate in a US Landcare group;
- have a vested interest in the outcome of US Landcare actions; and/or
- add value to a US Landcare group.

You might be a US Landcare sponsor if you:

- provide resources to reinvest locally;
- help replicate US Landcare results from one place to another;
- see added value from your contribution; and/or
- realize a supporting business case for your organization to contribute.

Benefits of Participating in US Landcare

- Participants become a part of a larger movement.
- Participants can take advantage of a living and training/learning network.
- Participants have access to information, maps, and data to guide local action.
- Participants work with others to achieve broader and more diverse outcomes.
- Participants gain a common understanding of problems and solutions locally, regionally, and nationally.
- Participants can gain access to support and resources for coordinated action.
- Participants can better protect land and water for future generations.

For More Information Contact:

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Examples

Grayson Landcare Committee: (Independence, Virginia)

Grayson Landcare (GLC) is a community based organization seeking to improve landowner incomes while establishing sustainable management in the New River Basin of Virginia. Organized by the New River Land Trust with support from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, GLC cooperates with many partners (see text box).

Using Landcare as the model, the effort has stressed personal responsibility for the environment and future welfare of the region, "neighbors helping neighbors" through community based groups, integrated watershed management of forest and farm lands, scientifically validated management practices, and the development of value-added steps and new products to serve high value markets and increase returns to agriculture and forestry.

The people in Grayson County are actively engaged in creating a future that serves their economic, social, and environmental needs. The future is in capable hands.

Contact: Jerry Moles jmoles@igc.org <http://www.publicecology.org/graysonlandcare/links.html#33> or call 540-797-9531

Participants in Grayson Landcare:

Mount Rogers District and Grayson County Planning Commissions; New River Soil and Water District; New River Highlands Resource Conservation & Development Council; New River Roundtable; Virginia Tech Colleges of Natural Resources and Agriculture and Life Sciences; Virginia Tech Foundation; USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and Forest Service; Virginia Departments of Agriculture, Forestry, and Recreation & Conservation; Carroll-Grayson Cattle Producers Association; Governor Tim Kaine's Office; Congressman Rick Boucher's Office; Senator George Allen's Office; Food City, a super market chain in Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee; Next Generation Wood, Inc.; Foresters Inc.; New River Community Partners; National Committee for the New River; and the Virginia Farm Bureau.

Upper French River Watershed (Asheville, North Carolina) – this four-county region borders the Eastern Continental Divide on the southeastern boundary of the Mississippi River Basin. Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) is a voluntary association of four county and 15 municipal governments. Three key conservation issues are fragmentation of working lands (farms and private forests) due to urban sprawl; the proliferation of exotic invasive plant and insect species; and overdevelopment of sensitive mountain ridges and steep slopes.

Using the US Landcare definition and criteria for Landcare groups and projects, LOSRC staff are approaching watershed groups, urban neighborhood groups, local governments, agricultural agencies, conservation districts, RC&D councils, and others to form new landcare groups and/or to sponsor landcare projects. Two experimental uses of Landcare under consideration in the region are as an organizing model for a voluntary mountain ridge protection program and a voluntary county junk removal program.

LOSRC has active Landcare affiliation negotiations underway with the Town of Montreat, and with the Elisha Mitchell chapter of the National Audubon Society in Asheville. One Montreat commissioner has stated that "We want to be the first town in North Carolina to become a Landcare community." The Audubon chapter co-owns an urban bird sanctuary and wetland with an adjacent neighborhood association. It periodically coordinates volunteer work days to remove invasive species and plant native species in the sanctuary.

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